



University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Environmental Center
A Unit of Water Resources Research Center
Crawford 317 • 2550 Campus Road • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-7361 • Facsimile: (808) 956-3980

RL:01451

SB 1097 RELATING TO TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Senate Committee on Economic Development
Senate Committee on Water, Land and Hawaiian Affairs

Joint Public Hearing, February 10, 1999
1:00 p.m., Room 225, State Capitol

by
John T. Harrison, Environmental Center
Sheila Conant, Zoology
David Duffy, Botany, PCSU
Charles Lamoureux, Lyon Arboretum
Clifford Smith, Botany, PCSU

SB 1097 would amend Sections 195F-3, 195F-4, 195F-6 and 183-16, HRS, to allocate income from the forest stewardship fund on a priority basis to reforestation and maintenance of harvested plantation areas.

Our statement on this measure is compiled from voluntarily submitted opinions of the listed reviewers and does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The idea of using income from harvest of non-native products from State lands to support a program of sustainable forestry has merit. However, the proposed amendments, particularly those of Section 4 of the measure, are unacceptably ambiguous. As written, subsection (a) may affect spending of the forest stewardship funds that are already available from the conveyance tax, allowing these funds to be commingled with receipts from the sale of nursery seedlings and non-native forest products. In addition, since any experienced program manager can ALWAYS substantiate a claim that a program is not "adequately funded", the proviso starting on page 4, line 23 would effectively divert all available funds to maintenance of designated timber management areas. To remedy this ambiguity, we propose the following language:

Page 4, line 6:

- (a) There is established a special fund within the state treasury known as the forest stewardship fund from which payments shall be made by the board pursuant to agreements entered into with qualified landowners to further the purpose of this chapter.
- (b) A portion of the forest stewardship fund equivalent to the income derived from the harvest of non-native products from state lands and the sale of tree seedlings from the state nurseries shall be directed towards:
 - (A) Replanting, managing, and maintaining designated timber management areas;
 - (B) Enhancing the management of public forest reserves; and

(C) Developing environmental education and training programs pertaining to sustainable forestry.

We further note that a likely outcome of promoting non-native sales as a means of generating revenues will be excessive emphasis on monoculture forestry. This in turn will lead to plantation practices that replace native forests with alien species and promote forestry practices that are geared towards export products, rather than those that would enhance local industry. Eucalyptus and other monoculture species may offer profitable biofiber exports, but such practices result in long-term soil depletion and watershed deterioration.